

1. Record Nr.	UNISA996732997603316
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Titolo	Pre-Modern Arabic Documents : A Concise Introduction into Reading and Publishing / / Andreas Kaplony
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berlin ; Boston, : De Gruyter, , [2026] ©2026
ISBN	3-11-224814-7
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (XII, 150 p.)
Collana	Studies in the History and Culture of the Middle East , , 2198-0853 ; ; 51
Soggetti	HISTORY / Study & Teaching RELIGION / Islam / General LITERARY CRITICISM / Middle Eastern
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- 1Introduction: The Challenge of Reading Arabic Documents -- Arabic Papyrology as an Academic Field in Its Wider Context -- Excursus I: Getting Access to Collections and Archives -- A Formal (Diplomatic) Typology of Arabic Documents -- Writing a Standard Edition -- Excursus II: Five Steps to Get Going with a Specific Document - And a Remark on Publishing Many Documents at One Time
Sommario/riassunto	Reading Arabic original documents is a serious challenge. At first sight, Arabic original documents seem to be casual and therefore rather illegible. Yet upon closer acquaintance, the opposite shows to be true: Arabic documents are highly formal. Written by professional scribes, they follow rather strict rules (not to speak of fashions) in both text and layout. However, only a few scholars have learned to read them and now take advantage of this formality, and only a very few of these share their knowledge with others. Making this know-how accessible to a wider public is the explicit aim of this handbook: how to deal, in a cautious and self-critical way, with pre-17th-century Arabic documents on papyrus, paper, potsherds, parchment, etc. - how to find them, how to publish them, and how to use them as a source for research in linguistics, literary studies, and writing history.

